



## *On the Road to Shanghai*

### Special Olympics Committee presents their bowling team

International Awareness Week for the Mentally Disabled took place last week from June 25 to 30. In Aruba, the SVGA, or *Stichting Voor Verstandelijk Gehandicapten Aruba*; The Foundation for the Mentally Disabled, is the parent foundation for the Special Olympics, and they spent the week presenting their teams that will travel to Shanghai, China in October for the International Special Olympics conducted every four years.

The early part of the week witnessed the presentation of the table tennis team, and Saturday afternoon was spent at Eagle Bowling Palace, where the athletes selected for the bowling team were named. Attending the presentation were President of the SVGA, Arturo Werleman, and Christina van den Berg de Freitas, a founder, and Lieutenant Governor of Aruba. Additionally present were members of the board of both the SVGA and the Special Olympics Committee, who witnessed the signing of the yearly agreement between the SVGA and Sales and Marketing Manager of Digicel Wanda Broksema, representing the company as the corporate sponsor of the foundation. Digicel donated 30,000 Aruban florins towards the foundation, and promised an additional donation to assist in sending the Aruban athletes to Shanghai.

Finally, the moment had arrived, and bowling Coach Richardina Henriquez-Kock announced the team members that will represent their country internationally. Jacqueline Giel, Vanessa Bernabela, Reynold Wernet and Mark Gonzalez. It was also announced that Gabriela Samson and Ronald Feliciano will compete in Track and Field, and Juliette Oduber and Brian Kooperdaal will make up the swim team. Additionally traveling and representing Aruba in table tennis will be Deshaneira Mohammad, Zaina Maduro, Jhorzy Arias and Maikel Wouters, for a delegation of twelve athletes plus their coaches.

The festive event continued with the presentation of the teams beautiful uniforms, a special banner from the Director of Volunteers, Netty Williams, and a training tournament for the bowlers.

Aruba's Special Olympics Foundation is still attempting to raise the substantial funds that are needed to send the team to China. Contributions are welcome, as they are only about half way to their goal, so if any cares to assist them on their way with a donation, call Arturo Werleman at 730-0414, or Netty Williams at 585-9533. Contribution cans have been placed at various locations, such as Certified Grocery and Eagle Bowling Palace, where you can donate your loose change. Aruba's special athletes are training hard and ready to compete for their country in Shanghai, and they need your help to get there!